



Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Conaway

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning
In Celebration of Black History Month

FOR the purpose of joining the annual celebration of the achievements of black Americans, recognizing the central role of African Americans in U.S. history, and highlighting the varied inspirational and educational events available to residents of, and visitors to, Baltimore City to commemorate the celebration of Black History Month.

Recitals

In proclaiming February 2011 as National African American History Month, the President of the United States quoted the great abolitionist and orator Frederick Douglass, “If there is no struggle there is no progress”, reflecting that progress in America has not come easily but has resulted from the collective efforts of generations, noting that for centuries African American men and women have persevered to enrich our national life and bend the arch of history toward justice.

The President remarked that this year’s theme “African Americans and the Civil War” invites reflection on 150 years since the start of the Civil War and on the patriots of a young country who fought for the promises of justice and equality laid out by our forebears. In the Emancipation Proclamation, President Abraham Lincoln not only extended freedom to those still enslaved within rebellious areas, he also opened the door to African Americans to join the Union effort.

Baltimore City residents can particularly relate to this year’s theme because of our city’s unique place in history as spotlighted by VisitBaltimore’s Civil War 150: The Baltimore Commemoration, April 15-17, 2011 - “Patriotism, honor, slavery and civil liberties, these were the issues that Marylanders faced in 1861. Baltimore, a divided city in a divided state in a divided nation, witnessed the first bloodshed in a conflict that gave America a “new birth of freedom.”

The Commemoration includes the recitation of historical events and visits to historical places, such as the rerouting of President Lincoln from the Calvert Street Station to President Street to foil an assassination plot, the Pratt Street Riot, the Camden Station stop for President Lincoln on his way to deliver the Gettysburg Address, and the 1865 stop of his funeral procession on the way to Springfield, Illinois, Federal Hill, Fort McHenry, Fell’s Point,

the USS Constellation, Patterson Park, Mount Vernon Place, the B& O Museum, the graves and monuments of Civil War soldiers, and famous and infamous figures in the history of the Civil War.

Other events celebrating Black History Month in Baltimore City at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum include:

- February 13th - a film: “Whispers of Angels, A Story of the Underground railroad”;
- February 19th - author appearance and book signing: “More Than a Slave: The Life of Katharine Ferguson”;
- February 26th - a discussion: “Brothers in Blue: Uncovering Civil War Ancestors with Leslie Anderson”;
- February 26th - storytelling: “Li’l Dan the Drummer Boy, A Civil War Story by Romare Bearden, and ;
- February 26th - re-enactments and recitations: “Living History Presentations: Civil War and the Maryland U.S. Colored Troops.

As we reflect on the historic contributions of great African Americans, native to Baltimore City and nationwide, during Black History Month, we also pay homage to the “everyday” men and women who continue to prevail in the face of modern-day adversities of injustice and inequities to build on the foundation our ancestors so valiantly wrought.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That this Body joins in the annual celebration of the achievements of black Americans, recognizes the central role of African Americans in U.S. history, and highlights the varied inspirational and educational events available to residents of, and visitors to, Baltimore City to commemorate the celebration of Black History Month.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor and the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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